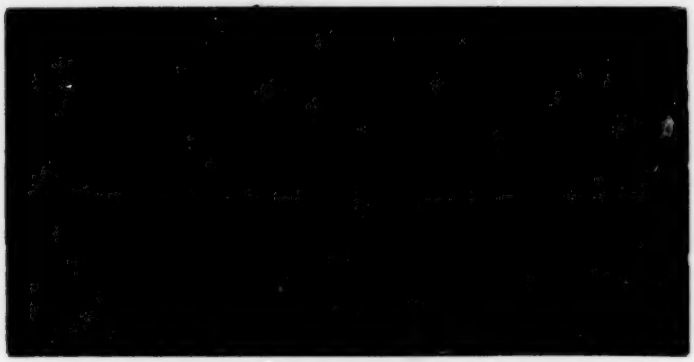

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# AN INITIAL APPRAISAL OF CAREER RESOURCE SERVICE OPTIONS FOR HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

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# I. BACKGROUND

During 1988/89, the Hamilton Area Canada Employment Centre and the three Hamilton area Boards of Education worked together to complete a survey of adult learners enroled in Boards of Education classes in Hamilton-Wentworth. Two thousand questionnaires were completed by adult students in three program areas - English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE) and credit courses. The number of responses received from each of these areas were as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| ESL | 643 |
| ABE | 199 |
| CREDIT | 1158 |

This survey generated 12 major recommendations pertaining to improved service to adult learners. Following the release of this report, the Liaison Committee recommended that a review of the feasibility of establishing a formalized network of Career Resource Centres be carried out in response to the identified need for improved access, by adult learners, to information and supports in finding and choosing courses. A Career Resource Centre sub-committee was established in January, 1991, and this committee established a terms of reference for a feasibility study of forming a formalized network of Career Resource Centres which

- avoids duplication of existing services
- builds upon and co-ordinates existing community infrastructure and resources
- addresses client needs by bringing the resources closer to the client in a user-friendly format
- is cost-effective, flexible and adaptable to accommodate change
- incorporates successful components of developments in other geographical areas
- acknowledges demographic trends and population growth patterns within the Region
- involves input from adult learners themselves and service provider agencies

The purpose of the present report is to provide an initial identification and appraisal of alternative models for the delivery of career resource initiatives and a preliminary appraisal of the relationship between the alternative delivery models and potential target group. This report will serve as a basis for a more in-depth analysis of an appropriate model for delivering career resource services within the Regional Municipality of Hamilton-Wentworth.

## II. ADULT LEARNER SURVEY

The local adult learners survey included a number of key results which are applicable to the issue of career resource centres.

1) Fifty-seven percent of the respondents were involved in adult education for employment-related reasons - either to get a job, a new job, or to qualify for skills-training. This motivation was strongest in the ESL group (77%), followed by ABE students (67%) and credit students (44%).

2) Of the fifty-two percent who were looking for a new or better job, almost half were already employed (46.7%)

3) Approximately a third of all students (32.5%) were on some form of social assistance. The largest proportion of this group were enroled in Credit Courses (55.4%), followed by ESL (30.1%) and ABE (14.4%).

4) The most common barriers to taking adult education courses which were cited by the respondents, were a lack of time (48%), energy (31%), personal problems (38%) and a fear of returning to school (31%). "Informational" barriers, relating to finding the appropriate course or course information were in the mid-range of barriers, affecting 20% to 24% of respondents (see Table I).

5) Married persons tended to report the fewest obstacles, while separated, divorced and widowed respondents reported the most - 50% of which identified "personal problems" as an obstacle.

6) The most frequent source of information about available courses was "friends" (47%), followed by newspapers (19%), schools/agencies (18%) and mail (11%). The dependence upon friends as an information source was particularly strong among ESL students (66%) compared to 36% and 39% respectively for ABE and Credit students. ESL students were less likely than the other two groups to hear about courses through newspapers, mail and schools/agencies.

TABLE I: BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION IN CONTINUING EDUCATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Not enough time | 48% |
| Personal problems | 38% |
| Not enough energy | 31% |
| Fear of returning | 31% |
| Timetable | 26% |
| Finding course | 24% |
| No course information | 20% |
| Getting into course | 18% |
| Fear of failure | 14% |
| Child care | 13% |
| Money problems | 13% |
| Lack of teacher time | 12% |
| Family support | 12% |
| Being "different" | 11% |
| Dissatisfaction with course | 10% |
| Transportation | 9% |
| Other problems | 3% |

7) In general, there appeared to be a good "match" between the skills which students were acquiring and future employment projections. Most of the desired skill areas (see Table II) reflect high growth occupations (see Table IIIA and IIIB).

8) The most common "Desired skill areas" were white-collar in nature and this reflected the occupational backgrounds of the students - clerical (22%), service (18%) and sales (10%). These occupations also reflect the fastest growing occupational sectors in Hamilton-Wentworth.

9) A much smaller proportion of students came from occupational backgrounds which have been experiencing significant job losses in the local economy-machining and related (3.1%), product fabricating, assembly and repair, (8%) and processing (4%).

Implications for Career Resource Initiatives

1) Purely informational requirements were a barrier for only 24% of the respondents. It is noteworthy, however, that these were respondents who were already enroled in courses and may, therefore, be more "information-sophisticated" than other members of the general public.

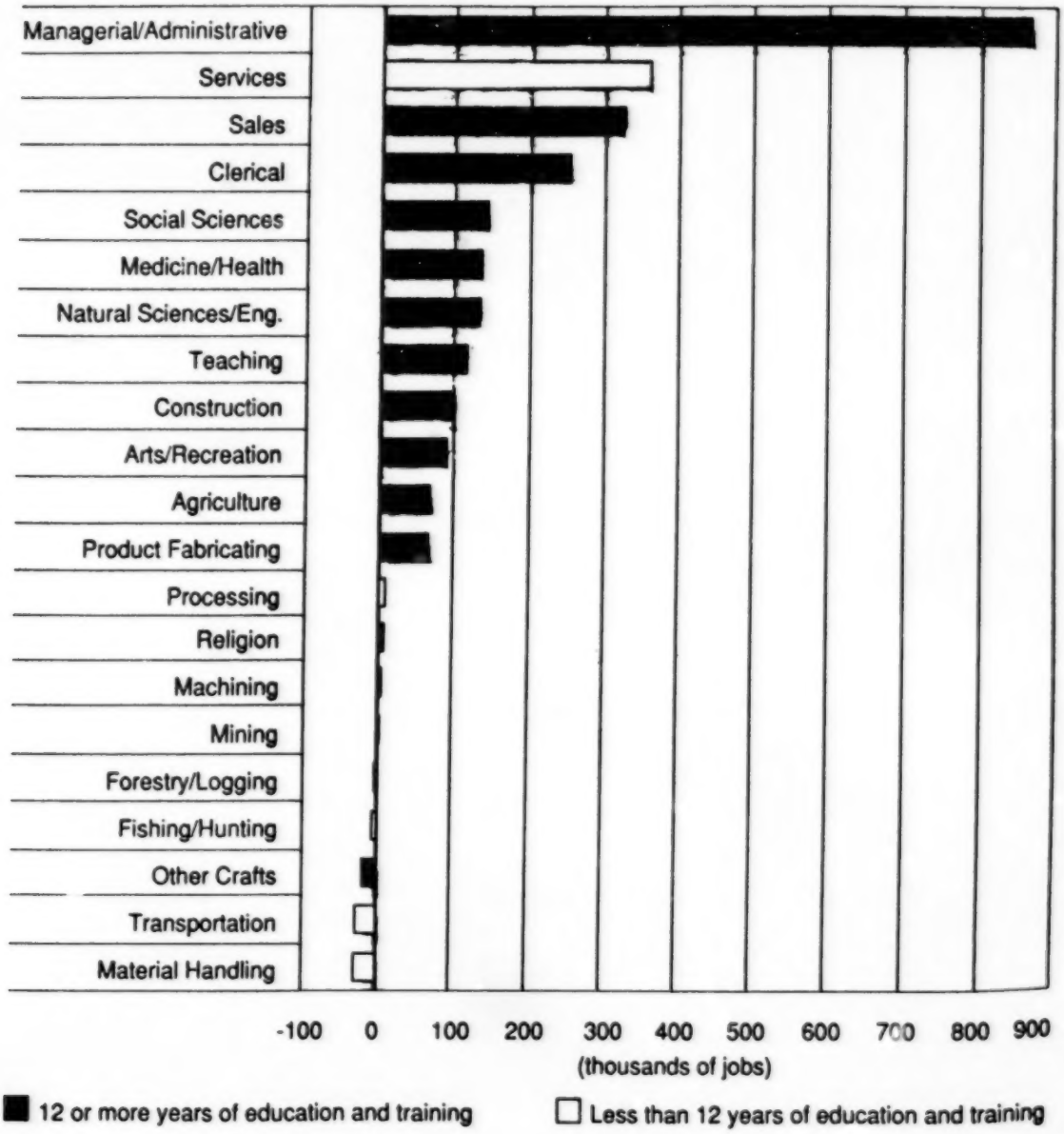
2) From an employment perspective, current adult courses serve a variety of target groups - social assistance recipients, employees seeking new jobs/positions, labour force re-entrants and employees seeking upgrading.

3) The results of the adult learners survey suggest that a majority of the employed learners come from rapidly-growing white-collar occupations who are seeking to upgrade their skills in those areas which are expected to continue to grow in the future. From this perspective, the adult learners appear to have made a "good match" between desired skills and future labour force trends.

TABLE II: INTEREST IN NEW SKILLS

| Skills Area | Students |
|---|---|
| Computers | 199 |
| Clerical | 158 |
| Accounting/Bookkeeping | 122 |
| Medical Training | 76 |
| Educational Training | 68 |
| Auto repair, maintenance | 37 |
| Management skills | 37 |
| Social Work | 37 |
| Sales, Purchasing and Marketing | 25 |
| Engineering | 22 |
| Electrical Technology | 22 |
| Welding | 21 |

TABLE IIIA: OCCUPATIONAL TRENDS - NATIONAL PROJECTIONS




Source: Success in the Works: Employment and Immigration Canada, 1989

TABLE IIIB: OCCUPATIONAL TRENDS (1981 TO 1986) HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

| Occupation | Change in Number of Jobs 1981 - 1986 | % of New Jobs |
|---|---|---|
| Management and Administration | +4460 | 35.3 |
| Artistic, Literacy and Recreation | +2280 | 18.0 |
| Sales | +1700 | 13.4 |
| Medicine and Health | +1570 | 12.4 |
| Teaching | +875 | 6.9 |
| Clerical | +665 | 5.3 |
| Farming | +645 | 5.1 |
| Construction | +440 | 3.4 |
| Machining, Product Fabricating, Assembly and Repair | -3175 | |
| Processing | -2635 | |

Source SPRC Tabulation from 1981 and 1986 Census Results: Statistics Canada.

4) The results also suggest, however, that adult learner courses have had a more limited penetration into the blue-collar occupations which have suffered significant job losses during the past decade. This may be partially attributable to an age factor. Relatively few adult learners were over the age of 45 (22%) and it is the older age group which has been most affected by blue-collar job losses. This may, in turn, reflect the nationally recognized difficulty of attracting older workers to skill-training/upgrading programs.

5) The results pertaining to barriers have important implications for the design of a career resources service:

| Barriers | Implication |
|---|---|
| 1) Lack of time and energy | 1) Convenience of access is critical |
| 2) Personal problems | 2) Resource program should also deal with non-employment issues |
| 3) Fear of returning | 3) Support for decision-making i.e. peer support |
| 4) Finding course and information | 4) Informational resources required |
| 5) Child care, money problems, etc. | 5) Need to link to non-employment resources/services. |

## III. CAREER RESOURCE INITIATIVES: GENERAL APPROACHES

Russell and Mulder[1] identified two general approaches to career resource initiatives. Informational approaches provide basic information to clients on jobs, occupations, educational institutions, training opportunities, job opportunities and employers. The materials may be in print or automated form. Experiential approaches, by contrast, involve skill-development, testing/assessments, job matching or work sampling - "The experiential approach...can involve the student in becoming aware of his/her present level of career and personal development, through a structure multi-media counselling program and/or involve the individual in using actual hardware or work samples to explore interests and to test attitudes, skills or physical limitations (pg 3)." Counselling can be provided on an individual, group or peer support basis.

Given this delineation of approaches, Russell and Mulder (1990) then identified a number of interventions which can be utilized:

1) Print media: Basic information on jobs, careers and requirements.

2) Multi media: Basic information on jobs, careers and requirements is provided through video tapes, slides, audio-cassette tapes and film-strips.

3) Work samples: A simulated work experience which involves actual tasks, materials and tools associated with actual jobs. These methods are typically used to assess the clients' aptitudes and interests.

4) Microcomputers: Refers to the use of data-bases for

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1 Russell, S. and Mulder, R. Review of Technology in Career Resource Material in Canada, Toronto: Career Systems Canada Ltd., October 1990.

job/career information as well as aptitude/interest testing.

5) Career Centres: "Store-front" operations providing counselling support and one or more of the above four interventions.

In general, then, most career resource initiatives can serve a variety of purposes:

1) Providing basic information about occupations, careers and trends.

2) Providing basic information about employment programs and skill training opportunities in the community.

3) Aptitude testing.

4) Vocational interest testing.

5) Job placement/matching.

It is noteworthy that the Russell and Mulder review and a significant amount of other resource material on career resource centres focused exclusively on the client's employment/vocational interests. At least three local studies, however, have identified the critical importance of personal/family problems or supports as a determinant of the ability of some

target-groups to access or complete employment training programs.[2] These results would suggest that career resource initiatives should be broadened to include service-resources from other sectors of the community service system for some target groups.

As an illustration of this dynamic, the Tri-Board Adult Learner Survey identified that 50% of divorced, separated or widowed adult learners identified personal problems as a major obstacle to accessing and completing courses.[3]

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2 - Ball, C., Sandy, K., Bonham, S., A Community-Based Assessment of Native Employment and Training Needs in Hamilton-Wentworth. (Unpublished Draft Report): Hamilton Regional Indian Centre and the Social Planning and Research Council of Hamilton and District, 1990.
- Adult Basic Education Association of Hamilton-Wentworth. A Description of a Community Based Adult Basic Education Network, July 1990.
- Ball, C. and Houser, A. An Examination of the Impact of Employment Training Programs of Social Assistance Recipients in Hamilton-Wentworth.

3 McLeod, B. and Hernandez, E., Tri-Board Adult Learner Survey, 1989.

## IV. CURRENT RESOURCES WITHIN HAMILTON-WENTWORTH

A variety of services already exist within Hamilton-Wentworth which include career resource components within their programs. The purpose of this section of the report is to provide a brief overview of these services.

Hamilton Public Library: The Hamilton Public Library operates a Career Resource Centre within its main branch. This service provides information on careers, occupations, salary rates and assistance in resume writing and job search techniques. The Hamilton Public Library program operates 70 hours per week and responds to approximately 30,000 inquiries annually. Approximately one-third of these inquiries involve staff assistance. Ninety-two percent of users are adults, aged 18 or over and there has been a significant increase in the concentration of older workers, individuals seeking retraining as a result of occupational injury or disease, and new Canadians.

Industry-Education Council: The Industry-Education Council provides a number of programs for teachers and students in the secondary school system - career awareness seminars, symposiums, teachers' career awareness workshops and an "adopt-a-school" program which links individual schools to employers. The Industry-Education Council has also prepared a comprehensive career resource directory

The two programs identified above are specifically designed to provide career resource services to the community. In addition to these services, a number of other organizations include the elements of career resource services within more comprehensive array of employment services.

Mohawk College: Futures Program: This program, which is designed to provide youth with work experience, also includes pre-employment preparation, career planning and counselling within its services.

Regional Social Services, Employment Services Unit: Operating within the Regional Social Services Department, this program provides initial career counselling to social assistance recipients.

Youth Employment Centre: The Youth Employment Centre is funded to provide employment-related services to persons aged 15 to 24, including vocational assessment and counselling.

Hamilton Help Centre: This service provides a variety of employment-related services to older workers, aged 35 and over, including employment counselling and preparations.

Citizen Action Group: Citizen Action Group provides employment preparation and counselling services for welfare recipients, sole support parents and ex-psychiatric patients.

Canada Employment Centres: Canada Employment Centres provide employment counselling, aptitude and interest testing as well as training programs which provide an opportunity for unemployed persons to assess their qualifications and to test career plans.

In addition to these general programs, a variety of more specialized services are available for specific target groups -

PATH Employment Services - disabled persons

Vocational Rehabilitation Services - disabled persons

Hamilton Association for Community Living - developmentally disabled persons

The secondary school population also has access to school-based guidance services which include career information as a basic program component. Although local results are not available, a 1986 provincial study indicated that 75% to 80% of students identify guidance services as a useful source of career information.[4] It is generally acknowledged, however, that these services are limited in scope because of the prohibitive costs of developing "state of the art" career resources in all secondary schools.

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4 King, A.J.C. The Adolescent Experience, Toronto: OSSTF, 1986.

Conclusions

There are variety of services in Hamilton-Wentworth which include career resource components as a primary or secondary focus of their programming. Only one is designed for the public-at-large (Hamilton Public Library) and the most frequently cited target groups are youth (Industry-Education Council, Youth Employment Centre, Futures) and social assistance recipients/unemployed persons - Citizen Action Group, Regional Unit, Canada Employment Centre and the Hamilton Help Centre.

## V. MODELS IN OTHER COMMUNITIES

A number of interesting career resource initiatives have been planned or developed across the province during the past few years. The purpose of this section of the report is to provide brief descriptions of a number of these initiatives.

### Peel Board of Education

The Peel Board of Education has developed two initiatives. The Career Path Centre was established as part of the continuing education program within the Board to provide career resource services to a variety of adult learners. The Centre was designed to serve both individuals and businesses. The services to businesses and employers included employee assessments for companies which up-sizing, down-sizing or short-listing candidates; career seminars which are designed to enhance job performance among existing employees; prepare retiring employees for second careers or returning to school.

Services to individuals include a wide range of resources including aptitude/personality/interest testing, career planning, job search, resume writing and a comprehensive library of career information.

More recently, the Peel Board also launched a mobile careermobile which provides comprehensive career resource material and counselling within a thirty foot trailer. This initiative is specifically designed for secondary and elementary school students, particularly students who are at risk of early leaving. This vehicle is able to move from school to school, providing high quality and comprehensive resources at each school site within the system. It spends three weeks at each school and provides services to approximately 13 schools per year.

Niagara Peninsula Integrated Transition to Employment Services Program

The Industry-Education Council in the Regional Municipality of Niagara has launched a number of initiatives relating to career resource issues. Of particular interest are a number of Career Information Centres (CIC). The Industry-Education Council initially established four CICs to assist adolescent students to develop career/educational plans. These centres provide a comprehensive library of career information but do not include assessment programs. The CICs are also utilized by referred social assistance recipients.

Between November 1988 and May 1989, the four Centres were utilized by 6,952 students. The largest number of students were involved in group presentations (3641), group "career focus" presentations (1530), individual research (944) and individual career counselling (837). At that time, 9.5 staff were employed in the four centres.

The Industry-Education Council is currently in the process of negotiating the expansion of one CIC to include interest/aptitude assessment components and the increased provision of services to the adult learner population.

York Region Education/Industry Foundation and Career Centre

This Centre offers one of the most comprehensive assessment programs among the current CIC models. It utilizes a variety of assessment, counselling and work-simulation modalities to assist individual clients in the development of comprehensive career development plans. The Centre also provides fee-for-service programs to Workers' Compensation, Canada Employment Centres and the Region of York.

In addition to core career resource services, a number of specialized programs are offered in the Centre for high risk students, women and social assistance recipients and recent drop-outs -

a) Women's Access to Apprenticeships

b) Job Development Program for Social Assistance Recipients

c) Student Retention Program
d) Women's Self-Employment Centre
e) Co-operative Education
f) Training and Job Placement in Construction Trades

In summary, the York Centre has expanded the basic career information centre model to encompass a "one-stop access" model for a variety of target groups and services.

City of London Board of Education

This Board is seeking to establish a Career Access Centre which will provide services to students in Middlesex County. This Centre will offer group programs related to career planning and some individual assessment for students referred by guidance counsellors. In a later phase it is expected that the Centre will expand its services to the non-student population, business and industry on a fee-for-service basis.

Waterloo Region Roman Catholic School Board

A careers centre has been established in Waterloo to provide career information, assessments and counselling to secondary school students. The Waterloo Board was one of eight Boards of Education which received funds from the Ministry of Education to establish career information centres on a pilot project basis. The other Boards which received funding were East Parry Sound, North York, Kapuskasing, Kenora, London (see above), Stormont, Dundas, Glengarry (see below) and Sudbury. In addition to the provision of up-to-date information pertaining to careers. The CICs are expected to provide individual assessments, counselling and assistance with job searches for both youth and adults.

Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry

The Career Exploration Centre operates from a store-front location and provides career information and counselling to students and adults. The Centre does not yet provide a formal assessment program but plans to introduce such a program in the near future. The Centre is administered through the local Industry-Education Council and the Industry-Education Council is currently developing plans to implement a mobile unit to serve outlying communities within the catchment area.

## Conclusion

The most common model for career resource centres are Board of Education-based career information centres. The prevalence of this model is largely due to the provision of special Ministry of Education funds to eight school boards in March 1990. Within this basic model, however, there are a variety of specific services offered. All CICs offer basic career information while only some include assessment and counselling components. Most of the Ministry funded initiatives are based upon the Niagara model.

The Peel Board of Education has provided two interesting adaptations of this basic CIC model -

a) A career resource centre which also provides direct service to business and industry.
b) A mobile unit which makes the basic services of a CIC available, on-site, to all schools in the catchment area.

The York Region Career Centre has expanded upon the basic CIC model to -

a) offer an extremely comprehensive assessment service and
b) develop a number of specialized programs for specific target groups to create a one-stop-access model for a wide variety of users.

## VI. ALTERNATIVE DELIVERY VEHICLES

Given the various functions and components of career resource services, a variety of delivery vehicles have been utilized in the provision of these services to the community. Listed below, are the more commonly utilized delivery vehicles.

1) Central facility: The establishment of one community-based facility which makes a variety of career resource services available to one or more target groups. Examples of this vehicle include the Career Resource Centre at the Hamilton Public Library, the Career Path Centre in Peel and the Career Access Centre in London. These models can be operated within Boards of Education (Peel and London) by independent organizations (HPL) or by co-ordinating bodies (Niagara).

2) Multiple store-front facilities: The establishment of a number of community based facilities at strategic locations within the community. This model replicates the centralized facility in a variety of locations (i.e. Niagara).

3) Mobile Units: The operation of a centralized resource in a mobile vehicle which can be moved from one site to another (i.e. the Careermobile in Peel).

4) Career Awareness Workshops/Seminars: The staging of special events which are designed to expose participants to a variety of careers and resources.

5) Specialized Counselling Services: Individual agencies/programs which augment basic career resources with supportive counselling and or job placement services, often for specific target groups.

6) Guidance Services: In-school programs which are designed to expose students to a variety of career resources.

7) Remote Terminals: Un-manned computer terminals which are located in store-front locations to provide basic information on job vacancies or available resources.

8) Co-operative Education: Programs which provide students with direct experience in work-settings.

9) Partnership Programs: Partnerships between schools and employers to provide exposure of students and teachers to the employment market (i.e. Adopt-A-School).

10) Educational Information Centres: Specialized information centres, operated by educational centres for the purpose of assisting the "out-of-school" population to access course offerings (i.e. Mohawk-McMaster Information Centre).

During the past decade, there has been increased interest in the development of centralized resources, largely as a result of cost-effectiveness considerations. This is particularly true, for example, within Boards of Education. As the variety of technologies and programs for career resource services have grown, the costs of provision have also increased dramatically. These cost-factors have made it increasingly difficult to provide comprehensive, up-to-date, career resource services in every school through traditional guidance programs. This has resulted in an increasing interest in centralized, co-ordinated resources.

The primary problem associated with centralized facilities is one of awareness and accessibility, particularly among target groups for which time and transportation is an inhibiting factor. For this reason, interest has grown in mobile facilities which attempt to capitalize on the efficiency advantages of a centralized resource while, at the same time, reducing the accessibility problems associated with centralized facilities.

## VII. TARGET GROUPS

Career resource programs attempt to address the needs of a wide variety of target groups and, to a considerable extent, the type of program and the delivery vehicles are adapted for specific target groups in the variety of applications which are presently across the Province. Provided below, is a list of the more commonly defined target groups. It should be recognized that none of these groups are completely distinct. Considerable overlap does occur between the categories.

Adult Learners (Out-of-school-population)

1) ESL: This target group requires basic instruction in the English language before they are able to compete effectively in the employment market.

2) Basic Education: This target group requires upgrading in basic literacy and numeracy skills.

3) Structurally Unemployed: This target group requires new skills/qualifications because their current skills are in an occupational area for which there is a surplus of workers. Heavy presence on social assistance caseloads.

4) Career Upgrading: This target group requires upgrading within their current occupation due to a variety of developmental/technological factors.

5) Career Switchers: This target group requires new skills as a result of their desire to move into a new occupation. They may, or may not, be facing future employment insecurity due to structural changes.

6) Low-skill Group: This target group requires new skills or upgrading as a result of insufficient marketable skills.

7) Labour Force re-entrants: This target group requires new skills or upgrading as a result of a long-term absence from the employment market.

Student Learners

1) At Risk: Students who are at risk of dropping-out of school.

2) Career-confused: Students who are having difficulty deciding upon a career.

3) Career stable: Students who have decided upon a career and require basic information pertaining to requirements.

The size of these three groups within the student population will vary from school to school and from community to community. In general, however, the following observations provide some indication of the relative size of these groups:

a) Approximately 32% of students drop-out of school prior to the completion of secondary school requirements.[5]

b) In a 1986 survey of Ontario Secondary School students[6]:

- 62% agreed that they had a "good idea" about what they would be doing after finishing high school

- 62% reported that they had a "fairly clear idea" of their future career

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5 Ontario Ministry of Skills Development. Pathways: A Study of Labour Market Experiences and Transition Patterns of High School Learners, May 1989.

6 King, A.J.C. The Adolescent Experience. Toronto: OSSTF, 1986.

- 16% - 17% expected that they would be unemployed after leaving school

Future Trends in Target Groups

Predicting the future is a task which is always fraught with uncertainty. Based upon the existing trends literature, however, the following tentative conclusions appear to be justified.

1) ESL: Demand is expected to increase due to increased immigration levels, particularly from non-English speaking countries. In addition, technological developments in many occupations are making it increasingly difficult for workers to function without a knowledge of the English language.

2) Basis Education: Two contrary trends are impacting upon this group. Firstly, structural changes in the workforce are eliminating jobs which can be filled by illiterate workers. On the other hand, studies have indicated that the current literacy problems are highly concentrated among older workers who will be retiring during the next decade. As this group is replaced in the labour force by more literate young workers, the overall level of illiteracy among the working population may drop.

3) Structurally Unemployed: Ongoing and increasing structural changes in the employment market is expected to increase the size of this target group.

4) Career Upgrading: Ongoing and increasing rates of technological change are expected to increase the size of this target group within both the white-collar and blue collar sectors. An increased need for multi-skilled workers in a more mobile work environment is also expected to increase demand within this group.

5) Career Switchers: The incidence of career-switching is expected to increase.

6) Low-Skill Group: The size of this group may decrease as a result of the increased incidence of compensatory education programs and the ongoing decrease in school drop-out rates.

7) Labour Force Re-entrants: The size of this target group will probably increase as a result of the increase which has occurred in female-headed single-parent families during the past two decades. Current eligibility for Family Benefits Assistance is eliminated when the children of these families reach adulthood.

8) At-Risk Students: The incidence of drop-outs has shown a decrease over the past two decades, probably due to the increased availability of compensatory and special education initiatives within the education system. On the other hand, some contributing factors such as family poverty have increased during the past decade.

9) Career Confused: The size of this target group may increase as the variety of occupations increases and the increasing rate of structural change in the workforce causes growing uncertainty about the future supply of jobs.

10) Career Stable: The size of this group may decrease as a result of the factors identified in "9" above.

## VIII. THE APPLICABILITY OF DELIVERY VEHICLES TO TARGET GROUPS: TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS

Definitive studies about the relevance of alternative delivery vehicles to specific target needs, particularly at the local level, are not readily available. Given this limitation, the purpose of this chapter of the report is to provide a series of tentative conclusions based upon an initial review of the relevant literature and a series of informal interviews with providers in Hamilton-Wentworth and other relevant communities.

This tentative conclusions are advanced for two reasons:

1) To provide initial feedback about the appropriateness of different delivery vehicles for specific target groups.

2) To form the basis for Phase II of this study by identifying key information deficiencies in the future planning of career resource initiatives in Hamilton-Wentworth.

### ESL

Multiple-language-needs create significant barriers to accessing technological resources, counselling and job placement. Current plans within the community to develop a cultural interpreters service may diminish this barrier.

The current size of waiting lists for ESL classes, however, suggest that priority should be given to expanding instructional resources prior to an expansion of services designed to increase awareness about and access to these services.

Basic Skill Upgrading

Local studies have identified the need for more support resources to decrease drop-out rates and more instructional resources to reduce waiting lists. It is, therefore, possible that the capacity of the current system needs to be expanded prior to investing resources in awareness/accessibility increasing programs.

Structurally Unemployed

This target group is heavily represented on current social assistance caseloads and a number of initiatives for increasing the access of this group to training opportunities are planned or underway in organizations working within this sector. The extent to which the social assistance component of this target group could be assisted by career-resource initiatives needs to be reviewed with providers and clients within this sector.

Persons "at-risk" of entering this target group are employed in work-settings which are facing lay-offs and/or closure. The newly formed Regional Adjustment Committee is attempting to co-ordinate service responses to the problem of pending lay-offs and closures. In addition, Citizen Action Group recently received resources to establish a special response for firms anticipating lay-offs of fifty persons or less. The role and design of career resource initiatives for this group, should be reviewed with service providers and clients within this sector.

Career Upgrading

The majority of this target group is currently employed and require upgrading as a result of developments within their organization/occupation. Within many organizations, this need is addressed through internal human resource development plans and it is possible that the primary targets for

career resource information should be the human resource professionals within the employer groups.

Many smaller employers, however, do not have the internal human resources staff or skills to carry out this function. It is possible that the priority within this sector should be one of increasing the access of employers to information pertaining to skill-training and upgrading opportunities through umbrella organizations such as the Chamber of Commerce and other business associations.

Career Switchers

The majority of this target group is currently employed but are motivated to consider another career/occupation for a variety of personal and employment related reasons. It is, therefore, probable that this target group could be well-served by all components of traditional career resource programs.

Geographically, this group is likely to be dispersed throughout the community and they are unlikely to be associated with a single-access-point such as a specific agency or organization. Given the "self-referral" nature of this population and the probable high level of interest or motivation, it is possible that this group could be well served by centralized facilities such as the HPL centre or the McMaster-Mohawk Centre, if they were aware of their existence. This suggests that the priority initiative for this group would involve a broad-based promotion of existing resources. It is notable, however, that there is an apparent lack of assessment services for this target group in the community.

Low-Skill Group

This target group is heavily represented on social assistance caseloads and within a number of agencies/organizations. The potential role of career-resource initiatives in addressing the needs of this group needs to be reviewed in conjunction with providers and consumers in this sector.

Labour Force Re-entrants

The majority of these target groups fall into two groups - social assistance recipients and women who have been out of the labour for a significant period of time. The potential role of new career resource programs in addressing the needs of the social assistance component should be reviewed with providers and consumers within that sector.

The needs of women who are not associated with the social assistance system but have been out of the labour force for an extended period of time may be somewhat analogous to those of "career-switchers" identified above. It is possible, therefore, that they could be best served by broad-based initiatives to promote existing resources in the community and an expansion in assessment capabilities.

At Risk Students

This group is typified by the potential need for career-resource programs and, in some cases, non-employment supports for other personal problems. Given that these students are still within the school system, school-based programs are obviously relevant. Given the choice of alternative delivery vehicles, it would appear that a mobile-unit, similar to the Peel model, may be the most cost-effective approach to addressing this group for the following reason:

1) It eliminates the need for a costly comprehensive program within every school.

2) It enhances the accessibility of this vulnerable group to resources by providing on-site assistance.

Career Confused and Career Stable Students

It would appear that this group would be well-served by all components of traditional career resource programs, with the possible exception of job-placement assistance. As with the at-risk students, it would appear that a mobile unit may be the most cost-effective approach to providing the greatest number of students with access to the highest quality resources.

In addressing the needs of all three student groups, a mobile unit should be designed to directly complement the guidance services available within the current school system.

## IX. DISCUSSION

Career resource initiatives offer a variety of services to a number of different target groups across the province. The most frequent model, based upon pilot projects in the Niagara Region, are school-based programs which provide centralized career information services to secondary school students and, in some cases, to adult learners. The prevalence of this model is primarily due to the special funding which was provided by the Ministry of Education to eight Boards of Education in 1989. Most of these centres offer career information as a core program, while a few also offer counselling resources. Standardized assessment testing is less frequent.

One community (Peel) has adapted the store-front CIC model in the form of a mobile unit which provides basic CIC services on-site at locations throughout the catchment area. Peel has also adapted the basic CIC model to include consulting services to business and industry.

The most comprehensive model appears to be the York Career Centre which includes comprehensive assessment services and a number of specialized programs which create a one-stop-access centre for a variety of users and services.

The most common target group for these models is secondary school students although some have identified adult learners as key client groups. Within the secondary school student group, at least three centres (Peel, Niagara and York) have specifically identified "at risk" students as a priority group.

Hamilton-Wentworth contains a variety of career resource programs in a number of different organizations. The local equivalent of a career information centre is the Career Resource Centre, operated by the Hamilton Public Library. This program serves the general public and, consequently, provides assistance to a wider variety of target groups than CIC models in other communities. The Industry-Education Council sponsors a number of career initiatives for students and most of the services are available to specific target groups - most frequently youth, unemployed persons and social assistance recipients.

The applicability of different models of career resource services to different target groups is largely undefined. There does not appear to be any consensus among providers or in the literature about the question of which modality of service is best suited for which target group. Further research and planning is therefore required in the local area before a satisfactory answer can be provided to this question.

There does appear to be some support, however, for the use of a mobile career resource unit to improve the delivery of services to secondary school students. The costs of these services prohibit the development of comprehensive career resource centres in every school within the Region and, for this reason, there has been a trend towards the development of centralized facilities. In large regions, however, centralized resources pose accessibility problems. The two refinements which have been made to the centralized model, in order to counteract accessibility problems, are multiple store-front units and mobile units. The store-front units are often located in malls or other "high-traffic" areas to facilitate utilization by a number of target groups.

Given current uncertainties about the applicability of different modalities to different target groups, however, the development of multiple store-front units should be delayed until more consultation is carried out with providers and consumers which are representative of the non-student target groups.

There does appear to be some support, however, for the utilization of a mobile unit to increase the accessibility of secondary school students to comprehensive and high quality career resources.

MP/ms/ceic
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